



## Oakwood

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## Editor's Note

I have been given an insight into this campus that I didn't have before. I have met people who care about poetry and about life. They contributed to *Oakwood* and proved that sharing their experience through writing and artwork is important.

We need more people to see the world, to love life, to drink it in through their senses, and to appreciate it enough to write about it. Becky Meyer did it; look for her first place poem. Laura Maag did it, rather wryly, so look for her first place narrative. And Jeff Gleason, who braids together two aspects of SDSU, with his poem, "A Religion Known as Waterfowling," did it. Everyone who contributed did it. We all try to capture a moment like catching a single snowflake, then reflect on it as profoundly as we can.

In other words, we need more recorders. Poets were the journalists of their time—and still are in many ways. Artists in general still carry that function as reporters. Form has changed to follow the function of a changing society, but the need for poets and artists continues.

So, as both a journalist and a poet I believe I have a responsibility. I am also a historian.

This year's *Oakwood*, then, is as much a chronicle of life as it is a literary arts magazine. It is a time capsule, alive with the vitality of SDSU!

I strived for quality. We did it. Notice the word *we*; I could not have done it by myself. Many, many, thank yous to Jan Christianson, English department secretary, for all her help, especially those days I needed a secretary.

Also, because *Oakwood* is produced by students for students, I need to thank Jenny M., Becky M., Annie M., Eric L., Laura M., and J.T. A big thank you to my roommate as a special consultant to the selection committee and Wade Marks and Rob Ochsner for working with me and not against me. And since I can, I would like to thank my keen parents, Gene and Susan, for their wonderful love-support.

Patrick McGowan



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**I Deserved a Break...After a Week of McDonald's** Laura Maag  
*first place short story/narrative*

When I learned that the Catholic Church had named McDonald's as the unofficial fast food restaurant for World Youth Day, I became excited and disillusioned. Excited because as a child I cherished every Happy Meal I ate, and disillusioned because of today's commercialism infiltrating into my religion.

As a child my favorite commercials consisted of the walking dust mops called Fry Guys and Barney's predecessor, Grimace. I sympathized with Cheeseburglar because I craved cheeseburgers like most kids craved chocolate. I campaigned for swift and severe punishment of Cheeseburglar's arch-enemy, Ronald McDonald, for withholding such artery-clogging delights. Fifteen years and two health classes later I still anticipated a week of polysaturated fats and cholesterol.

After two days of let's-drive-Sister-Marietta-to-Murder and Who-can-identify-the-road-kill games, I stepped out of my Greyhound bus to receive my meal tickets. Each small red piece of paper cost me five dollars and allowed me to exchange it for one McDonald's meal. I imagined the meals would be along the luscious line of the COMBO MEALS, which usually cost between three and four dollars, but they threw in a free pope hat or pope scope.

I trudged two miles up hill, before I even began to smell the warm, tallowy, beefy aroma of frying Big Macs. A mile later, also up hill, I saw hundreds of McDonald's booths set up around the block. I had reached Eden. I did not hear any sizzling burger noises, but the smell had forced me to wring the drool out of my T-shirt twice before I reached the front of the line. I shoved my precious ticket towards the first server I spotted and grunted, "Big Mac!"

The server looked at me as if I had transformed into a Cro-Magnon before his eyes. "We only have barbecues, bratwursts and pasta salad left," he squeaked in his little pre-pubescent voice.

"No, thank you" I hissed in an unchristian tone and went off in search of a Big Mac. I later repented my rudeness, but at the time I wished him a life of agonizing acne for denying me my burger.

After waiting in six lines on my quest for the Big Mac, I gave up on eating a Big Mac or anything McDonald's-like for that matter. I handed over my ticket, acquiescing to their limited selection, and gave them a tired, confused and totally apathetic look. They tossed an authentic McDonald's bag at me which left me slightly hopeful. I opened it to discover an ice cold tube of grease and pepper on a year-old bun, half a cob of late field corn and a Coca-Cola. I took one bite of the brat and my mouth became coated with a layer of Crisco. I forced myself not to wretch. Luckily, the acidic levels of the Coke cleaned my mouth out. I tossed the brat and corn in a trash bin and sat down to cry over my five dollar Coke.

I cursed my church for betraying me. At this rate of decline McDonald's will soon be featuring the Pope, cardinals, and bishops on their 20-ounce, Super Sized cups. I can see it now: "Bishop Paul Vincent Dudley of the Sioux Falls Diocese. Statistics: 3245 baptisms, 9746 confirmations, 2017 marriages, 535 funerals, and one bar mitzvah. Way to go Bishop Dudley."

They can also sell Saints Happy Meals, with Joan of Arc and Saint Francis of Assisi action figures. Parochial schools will love them. What a sell out!

The story does have a semi-happy ending. I did get to eat an authentic Big Mac. Unfortunately, by the time I did, I preferred anorexia to fast food.





Abstraction Kellie Steinlicht

## Winter Rising

Becky Meyer

*first place poetry*

Silent  
Silent it comes.  
The endless prairie and  
snow capped hills wait to bask  
in the glorifying light.

Cottonwoods standing watch  
beside ancient blue spruce  
tremble as they lift their  
winter finery of frozen lace,  
anticipating the coming.

The spirits of Lakota Warriors  
which cry in December's wind  
are content for a moment to view  
the lustrous sun rising to enfold  
their ancestral homeland.

As the burnished Sun tops  
the distant hills all of nature  
turns to worship in awestruck  
silence God's bequest of  
winter's crystal dawn.





African Shepherd

Kris Steege



Roses

Kellie Steinlicht

## Wind Patrick McGowan

Where Darwin failed was in the quality of how the fit survive.

I hope to make it to California, but after breakfast I'll only have \$50 cash plus \$400 credit on my Visa and a full tank of gas. I've driven over 100 miles so I rest in this booth in a Country Kitchen in some remote town in Oklahoma. I smoke Camel Lights in chains, shaking since I left. And because of my rashness I wear what I own. But like a saint, I plan to cling to my poverty: I'll martyr myself in my thoughts, find a new niche, or maybe, I'll strip and run naked and start talking with the birds.

Darwin didn't fail entirely.

Time is no longer time when you wait for love. Time stops and you exist in the same moment until you get pulled out. Sure, life goes on. The day the night. The morning noon and night. The waking the sleeping the dreaming and breathing. But time does not. Time hasn't ended, just plateaued. You hate time for boring you and exciting you. Typographically, you're closer to the sun, more vulnerable to his rays, because, after all, love is a spiritual endeavor, like attaining heaven, right? And love is not humble, but a god, humbling, like a day.

I gave this journal entry (10/30/94) to Trinity to read. Now, while I eat my breakfast in Oklahoma, a youth group at a table nearby finishes a retreat with its breakfast. No tambourines ring, but voices ring, disturbing voices, distracting. They're all pretenders with fake smiles, and fake laughs. I know they'd all rather bed down, or get stoned or get something.

I sat in a booth in Country Kitchen in Brookings, South Dakota reading *Volpone* by Ben Johnson for English Literature. Trinity walked in having put anger into her trademark. She looked as if she'd been crying—but I was wrong. She didn't cry.

"What is this?" she asked, handing me a typed copy of my entry. She stood to the side of my booth, shaking, touching her face in nervousness.

"I thought you might like it," I said.

She had no reply so she sat down and grabbed one of my Camel Lights and lit up.

"I figured that one out. What does it mean, though?"

I sat across from her looking away, smoking, focused on some vacant point in space, in my mind; a point so close in vision that it's always out of focus.

"You don't want it," I said, too scared to admit anything. If I did admit it, I would have started to cry. I'm a crier.

"Yes, I do."

"No—"

"Yes." She looked at me pleading, insane with naivete, shaking.

"If I told you, all is over."

"Giving me this," she said, holding up the paper, "changed everything already. When you gave me that letter, things changed."

"That first note made you happy."

Trinity poured some coffee from my pot into the extra mug on the table and added cream and sweetener. She handed it to me. She then did the same to my empty cup and kept it for herself. Again she grabbed my pack of smokes, but this time she lit two and offered me the second. I took it.



We both smoked to our butts and didn't speak.

"Patrick—"

She wrestled her words, trying to pin them down. How often have I experienced that and never known what I really looked like? Shaking, she took another grit. She covered her eyes and her shaking legs shook the booth.

I couldn't tell her that she had given me hope when she had said, 'We're perfect for each other.' I couldn't tell her that she had plowed my space, irrigated my thinking, harvested my heart.

I wasn't going to tell her what she didn't want to hear.

She looked into my tired blue reading-eyes.

I nodded.

I packed my backpack and paid my bill. (I wrote the check out for \$30 more with intentions.)

"Follow me to my place," I told her in the parking lot.

"I got dropped off."

We got in my car and drove west on Sixth Street towards my apartment. I turned right into the EconoMart parking lot and passed through the thru-way to Eighth Street. I turned left going west again, a left again two driveways down and then pulled into my reserved parking spot in front of my apartment. I put my Buick in park but didn't turn off the engine. I hoped to simply take her home.

"I'm doing this because—"

"Shhh—" she said, "time is no longer time. Nothing can change that except this," and kissed me on the cheek and got out of my car.

She meant my explanation. And, like her, I wasn't afraid of the commitment to the whatever that might follow but the immortality of it. Shaking, I lit another Camel while Trinity stood waiting by the door, shivering.

We entered my apartment and I set my Eastpack on the floor by the fridge and we took off our coats. I wish we could have taken off more and just laid together—even in pajamas.

She sat down in my La-Z-Boy and I turned on my roommate's JVC-CD player. *Journey* sang from the two Technics speakers.

"Read me that paragraph."

Trinity took from her back pocket the infamous copy. When she finished I handed her a cigarette and threw her my lighter.

"You want to know what it means."

She nodded.

"This is what you want," I took her hand and led her into my bedroom. She stood in the doorway smoking as I opened the bottom drawer to the right filing cabinet of my desk. I took out my journals, five in total.

Staring at my notebooks I thought, *I can't give you flowers, can't buy you chocolates, can't spend any sort of money on you simply because that's not your way. I can, however, give you, show you, express myself in words. I trust you to read who I am.* "Now, you tell me," I said. I handed her my journals.

She refused to take them. So, I threw each journal at her, each hitting its mark. It was only paper. Only words on a page. I'm sure ink has more weight than the page itself—but that's only the case if you read it.

She slid down the wall outside my bedroom and next to the bathroom. I wanted to comfort her. I couldn't comfort her. I know this. She squatted on the floor against the wall with her face in her arms folded across her knees.

I decided to commence my plan; the one I left the restaurant with. I walked to the living room to where my backpack rested. In it I found my most recent and unfinished notebook. Walking around her again I went into my room and took from the filing cabinet on the left a blank notebook, the one I'm using now, and a pen from my desk organizer.

On my way out I dropped this last journal at her feet.

I had dropped the bomb—these journals—and everything did change. You can't gather the parts after the atoms have spliced everything in sight, exponentially ripping harm wave upon wave.

I sat in my car tuning and bitter. Heaven was a lot further away than I hoped. I smoked a cigarette and vacated her from my mind with each exhalation. That unfocusable point disappeared. Everything seemed so clear: where, what, when, how, why. Of course, who no longer mattered. Amazing that adrenaline so crazed may compel even the lame to run.

She ran from my apartment as I drove out of the lot. I had my window rolled down to let free the smoke. I could hear her clearly on that windless night. "I love you!" she screamed. I didn't trust my senses—I couldn't tell if it was true or my mind making another fiction, or maybe it was the wind. I've always had a habit of believing invented truths, so I kept on driving. And driving. And driving.





Untitled Amy Vermeer

# For Howlin' Wolf (The Backdoor Man)

Steve Lovett

*second place poetry*

The man in the black hat,  
his eyes, they burn,  
they burn me.  
It hurts me, hurts me to look at the man,  
but I can't look away.

He holds me with a steady driving beat,  
lifts my ribs with a trill,  
and slips out my heart with a bottle neck slide.  
He draws my  
breath through a harmonica and—  
begins to sing.

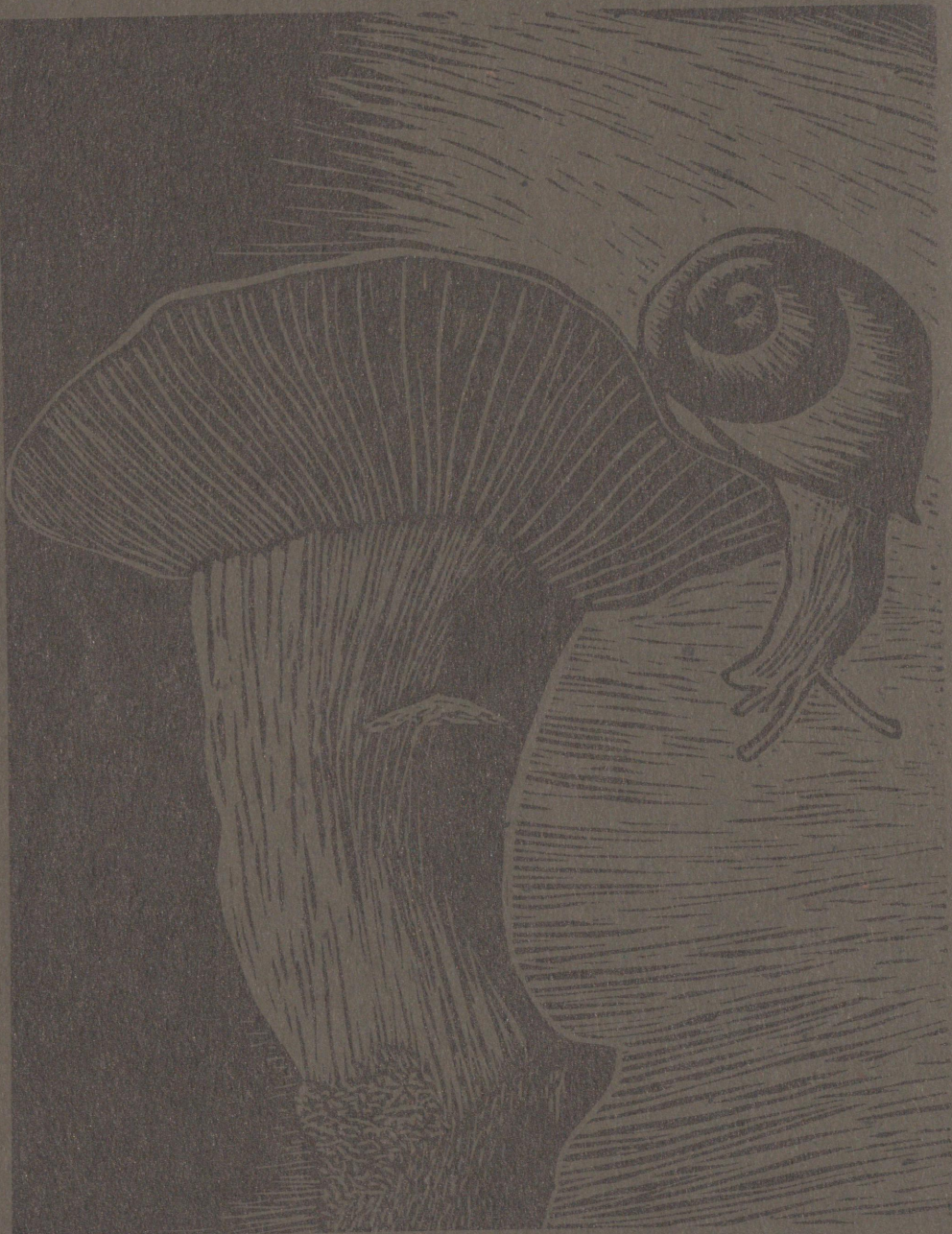
My body begins to shake,  
my feet slide round the ground and  
make little leaps like the ground's on fire,  
like the gates of hell are burnin' under the floor board,  
and I can hear Satan laughin', and laughin' out loud.

Mamma told me to stay away,  
to stay away from the men who  
play their guitars and sing about whiskey and women.  
She said their soul's sold—  
but I can't stay away.

They call out to each other at night and I hear,  
I hear the wolves howlin' at night,  
the howlin' wolves.  
We used to sing without words,  
we screamed and cried for our hunger  
for food  
and women  
and fire.  
What happened mama?  
Where them days gone mama?  
Why can't you hear me mama?  
WHY CAN'T YOU HEAR ME?

They sing and I dance,  
I dance and howl and it hurts,  
it hurts real bad like fire on skin.  
The smell of burnin' flesh is a healer,  
fire from out their whiskey torn throats,  
cigar throats,  
and my heart's on the floor  
and I can't breathe.  
My body ain't got nothin' in it and I'm  
spinnin' and tumblin' through the  
hot smoke of the pool hall and the  
stink and the women  
hangin' all out their dresses and  
I love them and the men that sing and play their guitars,  
the men who howl at shadows in the night.





Untitled Jennifer Cochrane



Caught a Snake Malenia Moore

Untitled Kris Hansen

—Dedicated to the memory of Judith M. Hansen, my Grandma forever.

Although it's too late now,  
I realize that Grandma was love,  
It was hard for her to let it show.  
I only hope she'll look down from above.

I was so used to her just "being there."  
I wish I could give her just one more hug,  
Or let her know that what I felt was love.

72-years ago God began to crochet  
The afghan that enfolded Grandma,  
Into her heart He stitched with care  
Loved ones bundled, so securely held there.

A masterpiece pattern,  
Until now we never knew,  
The pattern He created  
Was a Grandmother true.

Her time here was finished  
It was such a short while,  
Though I'll miss her daily,  
I'll not forget my Grandmother's smile.

Summer's Heat Becky Meyer

Your old car's jacked up  
like an unused teeter-totter  
Its dull green paint  
doesn't bother to reflect the sun.  
Sweat trickles down your arms  
as you toil to bring  
this pile of junk to life.

I wait to hand you  
tools when you need them,  
scratching at old mosquito bites  
made itchy by the heat.  
The wind barely stirs  
the ragweeds and flies buzz  
in a dull drone.

Then your hand slips,  
crashing your knuckles  
against ungiving steel.  
The stillness is broken  
by the wrench thrown  
to clatter against its metal box,  
like cymbals out of turn.  
Swear words you aren't  
to use around me explode  
from beneath the car  
and so do you.

Blood drips from your hand  
red but pale compared  
to your face.  
You glare at me as if it's my fault.  
You curse. I run.





Untitled Lottie McHarg

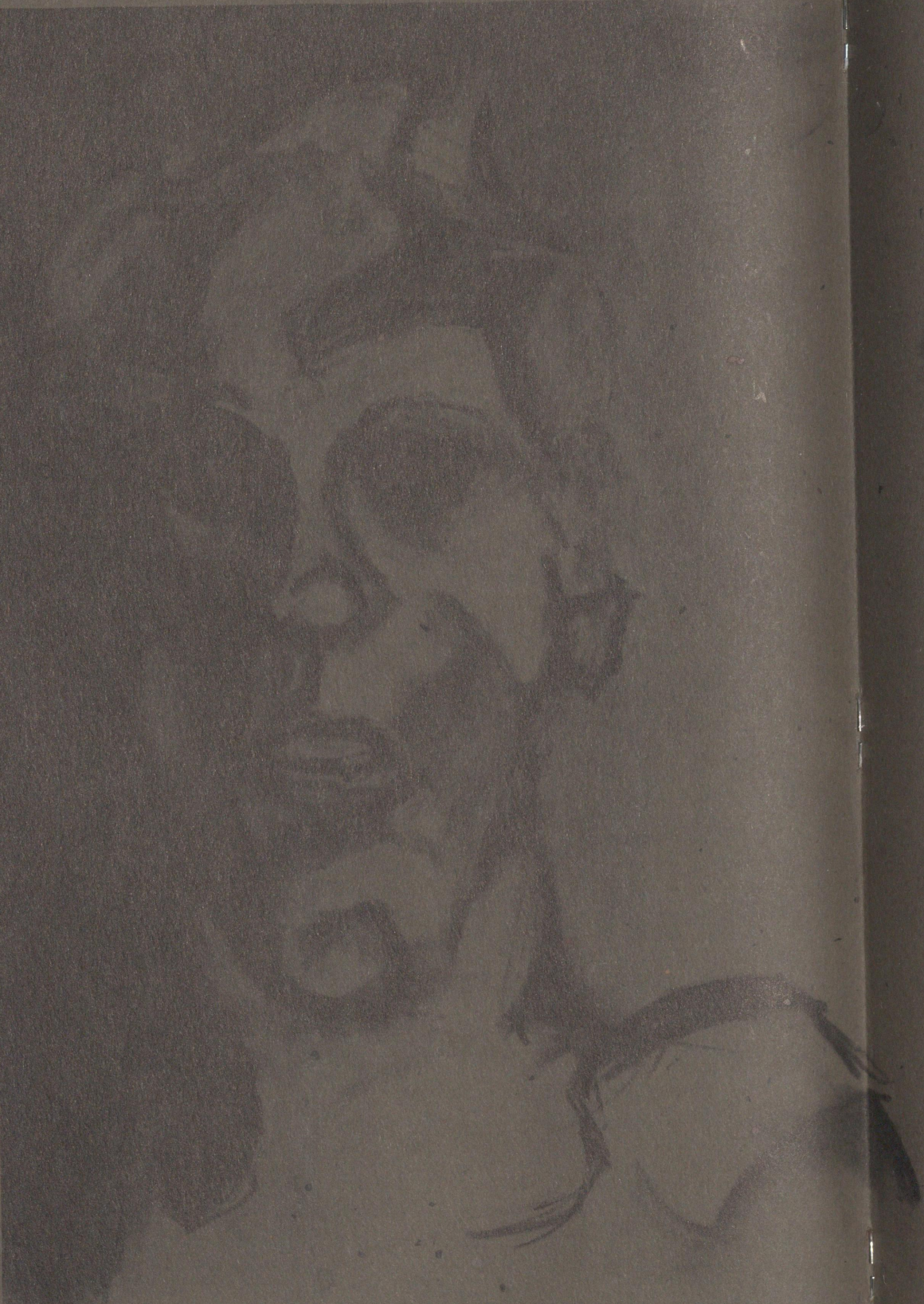


Leaning Pitcher Heather Struve

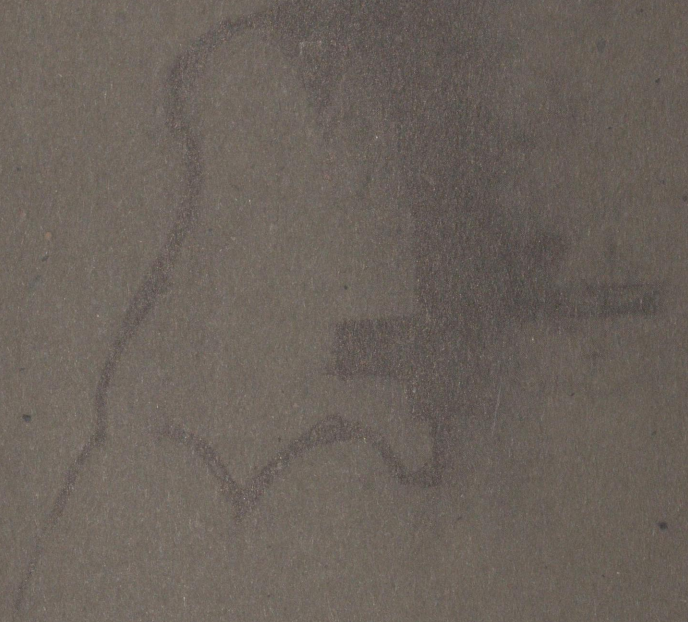
Water Eric Lochridge  
*third place poetry*

We all drank  
from the water fountain,  
perhaps in a bank  
or a hospital or  
when we were children  
in school.  
We all share  
the same water,  
recycled since the sun  
split the first raincloud,  
the water that  
Jesus made wine,  
that Hitler splashed across  
his sadistic face,  
that for which  
his Jews  
killed to get a spare  
drop on the tongue.  
We all will die  
and the steam  
of our shriveled bodies  
will ascend, purified,  
to remain  
roaming the earth  
without us.

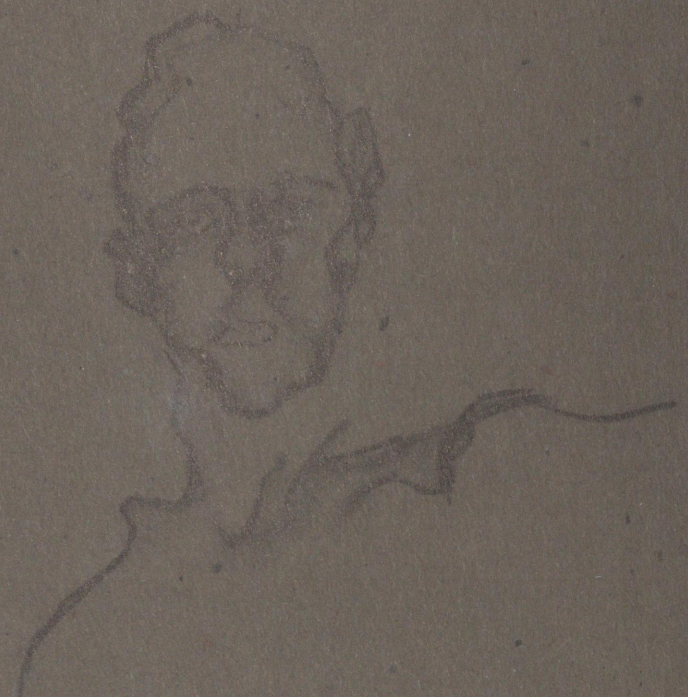




Self-Portrait Alan Gross



Girl Alan Gross



Caricature Alan Gross



## A Beginning Divided Becky Meyer

There comes a time,  
a moment—just before tomorrow  
when today stops  
long enough to dream of yesterday.

Within that brief instant  
we can see the beginning,  
before the encroaching end,  
an era of oneness now extinct.

There exists in our separate histories  
a common denominator,  
a mutual understanding  
of a time honored ancestor.

Before we became  
German, Irish, Spanish,  
African, Indian, or American,  
we are human.

We pause at the window  
opened to us—for just a moment  
reaching for an elusive dream  
unsuccessful we return to separateness.



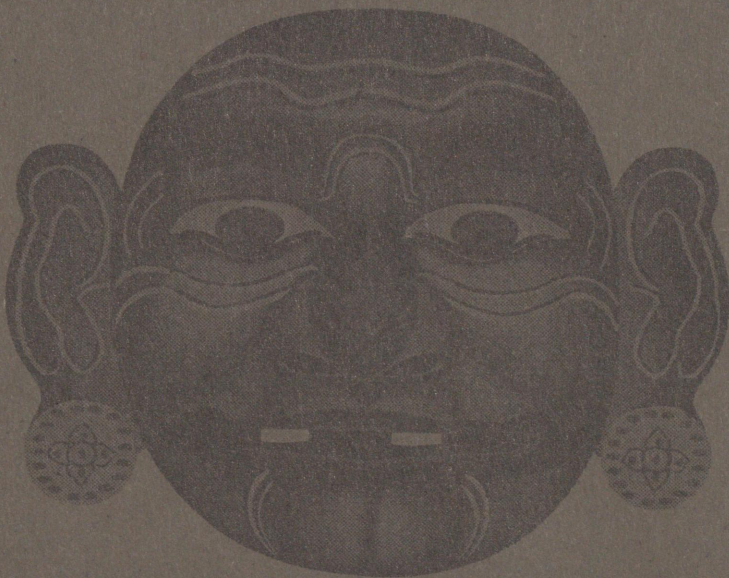
Butterflies Lottie McHarg

## A Sonnet Of All I Know Patrick McGowan

I.  
all i know of her Flesh:  
the soft Circle of her face  
and the Triangle—  
where her chin begins and down to  
where her shirt doesn't open any further.  
that's all I know.

II.  
all i know of her Self:  
her Beautiful Soul which she's exposed,  
but not her Blatant Soul—  
the one that can Bleed,  
the one she hasn't exposed to me.  
that's all I know.

III.  
so, of her Whole—  
i Know of not.



Mask Amy Vermeer





Amazon Cabello

Julia Erichsen

### Way After Midnight

John Anderson

*honorable mention poetry*

I sit on the couch seeing  
TV snow through moist and  
weary eyes.

Feeling moon glow upon my  
chest from the space between the  
curtains, I have to smile.

Maybe she can't sleep either.

### A Religion Known as Waterfowling

Jeff Gleason

*honorable mention poetry*

My church is the marsh, my pew the blind.  
My congregation includes the bittern, the  
heron, the wren, and the sparrow. My oratory  
comes via a piece of wood and a metal reed.  
I often recite passages from Hochbaum and Leopold,  
at least in my mind... as I wait patiently for  
my favorite family to arrive, the Anatidae.

### Flight Lessons

Pat Baker

The smoke screens turn to reality... pioneering spirit all petrified.  
Caged passion with bars of reason.  
Succumb to the tornado and stay alive.  
Keep one eye open and ride the wind.  
Awareness has come, through observation, hibernation.  
The mind is strength, seize the body and escape.  
The wind that shackled becomes a guide.  
Survival through sheer constitution.  
Thrive on the embracing chaos.  
Swallow its energy.  
Be alive.  
Be,





False Face Mask

Vicki Arnold



The Road from Corrain  
*is a*  
 Love Medicine  
*in*  
 A Room of One's Own.  
 The Four Loves  
*reaffirms*  
 The Solace Opens Spaces  
*and that*  
 Small is Beautiful  
*and a part of*  
 The Necessity of Empty Places.  
 Gaia  
*is*  
 A Small Place  
*a*  
 Ceremony  
*of*  
 Being There  
*with*  
 The Things They Carried  
*O, my*  
 Beloved  
 Sula,  
*you and I believe*  
 Life is Elsewhere:  
 A Thousand Acres  
*of*  
 Immortality.  
 At Play in the Fields of the Lord  
*is*  
 The Unbearable Lightness of Being  
 A Pilgrim at Tinker Creek  
*during*  
 War and Peace.  
 The Awakening  
*is*  
 The Story of My Life  
*is*  
 For Whom the Bell Tolls.  
 Cry the Beloved Country  
*and sing*  
 A Farewell to Arms  
*for*  
 The Chosen:  
 The Wizard of Loneliness  
 The Catcher in the Rye  
 The New Man  
 Candide.  
 Our Town  
*our*  
 One Hundred Years of Solitude  
*has*  
 The General in his Labyrinth  
*and*  
 The Old Man and the Sea  
 Possessing the Secrets of Joy  
*and the*  
 Spirit of Place.  
 Night  
 Braided Lives  
 Altars of Unhewn Stone.





Fox

Kellie Steinlicht

Foxtails and lamb's quarter have taken over the yard. They have choked out any remnants of the once prolific vegetable garden and have sabotaged attempts at growth in the flower beds. A hedge, once neatly trimmed, now has branches reaching out recklessly. It is as difficult to avoid the briar bushes on the walkway as it is to avoid the garden spider webs guarding against entry to the house.

The wooden porch of the house is as formidable as the yard. A tree root has undermined one corner of the porch leaving a precarious tilt on the deck. An old bathtub sits awkwardly at the other end of the porch. The wood has partially given way under the tub and it now sits askew. Littered about are dry, crunchy leaves and fragmented shells of walnuts.

Complementing the angles of the porch is a door to the house hanging by its lower hinge. Passage through the door proves challenging as it must be lifted to be opened. It is heavy and cumbersome with nothing to grip since the knob was previously removed. Our hands are coated with thick, hard paint chips when finished. They leave tiny impressions on our hands resembling mosaics.

The room behind the door is unusually large and it becomes apparent that the house has been gutted. Jagged pieces of ceiling separating the first floor from the second sit along the walls about eight feet from the floor we are standing on. The distinction between rooms that once made up the second floor are vivid as the dark wooden beams of the walls stand out against the weathered and sun-bleached wall paper. At the very top of the house, where the attic used to be, pigeons and house wrens now reside. A circular attic window provides the support for several nests. A gaping hole in the hardwood floor reveals the basement—a dark abyss of broken glass and bricks. A partially collapsed beam is reminiscent of a fallen warrior slumped over and exhausted. On the left of the room sits the fireplace. A light flush of cool air passing down from the chimney and entering the room adds a chill to the already inhospitable atmosphere of the house.

On the right of the room, through a cob-webbed doorway another room can be seen. This room is considerably smaller than the first one. Little sunlight penetrates the foliage of a tree outside the window. A small beacon of light makes its way through, though, and shines on the lone fixture in the room, a black waterpump. It sits firm, like a sentry on the sink. It feels cold and rough. Time and neglect have fused the handle and gears together. Grooves on the floor indicate where the stove once stood; now there are only traces of soot. A pattern of nail holes and wooden supports outline the space formerly occupied by cupboards on the wall.

A door at the other end of this would-be kitchen leads us back outside into the haphazard yard. As we make our way through the briars and weeds circumventing the house, feelings of melancholy settle over me. What a waste. These walls were once full of a family and the activities they created. Children played in the yard and ran up and down the stairs. A mother filled the kitchen with tasty smells and cared for the interior of the home. A father built many fires in the hearth and mended the tiny breaks that a house can get. This was the center of their lives and they made the frame and structure called a house a home. But now it has been abandoned, forgotten. Somebody ripped out its insides and no one will mend it. Paint will chip from the walls and grass will continue to grow. The only smells now will be of rotting wood and dampness. The house will slowly start to crumble until, finally, it will fall and die.



I'm a Little Teapot

Melanie Moore



What happens to the tears after  
 they drop from the face,  
 after they gently trickle down the  
 tenderness of the warm skin?  
 They drop from the jaw  
 line as if they weighed a  
 ton, and they do,  
 just falling and falling  
 like an object being  
 thrown off a load in  
 order to create more room,  
 but more room for what?  
 For more burdens, more  
 grief and more sorrow?  
 What is the purpose if it only opens space  
 for more pain?

Untitled

Kerri Welty

Sparrows

Eric Lockridge

Those crazy sparrows  
 bark about my  
 head  
 and shoulders misguidedly like  
 snowflakes  
 in March when spring sputters coldly.  
 Whistling songs of doubt as I  
 ignore them with cunning  
 and fox wit like a sex-starved  
 seeking motherhood for a deeply swallowed  
 child, astonished by the innocence  
 I love her he claims or the seeming question.  
 I trust you he stutters but not because he doesn't  
 because he does). The child wails  
 disbelief swinging about his  
 head wet towels  
 and shoulders to dispel  
 the misguided lunatic  
 sparrows.



I packed my suitcase,  
 stuffed full and sat on,  
 to latch it shut  
 before dawn today.  
 Had two speakers loaded  
 into the backseat  
 and was carrying the turntable out  
 when kids got up.  
 Saturday morning  
 I should have expected it.  
 They wanted me to play hide-and-seek  
 but it was getting light  
 and the Volkswagen was muttering.  
 Still excited to see me  
 up so early,  
 they wrestled my leg  
 never asking why  
 I had crammed  
 all I owned  
 into the shelled VW.

## A Kitchen Dream Eric Johnson

She has unearthed a garlic bulb from our dewy-wed  
 Garden and she brings it into the kitchen. I help her and  
 Watch the vegetable rows settle in the earth as they  
 Have done in prairie gardens for generations. My mind  
 Reaches back through the stories of my family to other  
 Gardens in older times. We move into the past  
 Of my great-grandfather's prairie house.

Our lives there follow the sun. We give seed  
 To the earth and receive it back after the days of summer  
 Heat pass. In the light of kerosene and burning wood  
 We prepare an evening meal of bread and vegetables.  
 Her hair is pulled up and tangled and delicate young  
 Hands already scarred weave in  
 And out of shadows.

Working in the small kitchen I am happily  
 In her way and she in mine. Our movements around  
 the black stove make a slow dance. Holding her there  
 I feel the toughness under soft skin and the room  
 Her body is making for our first child.  
 We make the earth and ourselves fruitful. We make  
 A life together.

Back in our modern kitchen we are doing that same  
 Slow dance. We are doing Italian and we crush and  
 Mix together—basil, garlic, olive oil.  
 Our eating roots our bodies to the earth and to the past  
 and to each other. We bring to the tables a celebration.  
 Basil, garlic, and olive oil.

Mailbox Heather Struve





The Prairie is My Garden

Jennifer Cochrane



Tiger

Jennifer Cochrane

## Adrenaline

Kelly Bradbury

The dilated pupils,  
The enlarged nostrils,  
Veins pulsating double time,  
Forelimbs a purple shade of blue,  
I clench the one thing separating my body from the ditch.  
My loss of breath helps steady the wheel.  
The minutes go by slow,  
The seconds even slower.  
Will this torture ever end?  
Forgetting for a moment where I'm headed,  
I think only where I've been.

## South Dakota in Autumn

Heather Jordan

I travel the prairie bakery by car  
observing the harvest through my windows,  
a child presses against the glass  
yearning to sample the sweets.

With the heat of summer's oven now gone,  
the mechanical hum of the muffin builders remains.  
The sun-ripened hay  
reminds me of a coiled cinnamon roll not yet frosted.

This cooling landscape is a giant breadbox  
filled with golden loaves of bread,  
and oat muffins

## Watertown

Steve Lovett

He just stood there, the sonofabitch,  
a parasite feeding on the  
liquid courage of the  
small town fucks tangled behind him.

I stood—and waited, my  
head hung cold and  
cocked. Hair swung  
over one eye.



## Designer's Note

Well, it's been an experience. Two months of wracking our gray matter have culminated in the book you're holding now—a book we're damn proud of.

It wasn't easy. Designing *Oakwood* means dealing with tremendous responsibilities, from collecting and selecting artwork, to typesetting the literary selections and ordering the paper and the die for the cover. Then add in all the technical and aesthetic considerations (legibility, reproduction of artwork, etc.) as well as our own urge to create a book that had a unique look from previous editions, all of which adds up to lost sleep.

In the process we learned a lot (like the best ways to cause headaches for the print lab crew), we argued a lot (both amongst ourselves and with others involved with the project), we drank a lot (of soda, that is) and we got really weird (like the five minutes we spent wondering if we could print this baby on the side of fish—Kids! Too much caffeine and too little sleep can have strange and unpredictable effects, sort of like Red Kryptonite).

This job has its rewards, too, not least of which is working with a highly diverse group of people. Everyone involved, from the English department to the print lab, had an effect on the final look of this year's *Oakwood*. We've learned that resistance to ideas, discussion and compromise can lead to stronger thinking and justification for any design.

Thanks are due to everyone who helped us. These people showed a lot of support and patience in the face of our (sometimes painfully obvious) inexperience. To Jeanne French and the Visual Arts faculty for their patience and guidance and for helping to promote this project among the students. To Beth McLaughlin and Denise Lundgren for not laughing in our faces when we told them our plans. To Mary Buslow, Jennifer Cochrane, and Kelli Ramey, who typed when our hands were cramped and our eyes were bloodshot. To Tracy Smutny for taking over where we left off. Our art selection team of Kelli Ramey, Josh Spies, and Mark Sternwedel. Extra special thanks to Diane Vander Wal for putting up with all the questions we didn't give her answers to and for keeping the art submissions in her office.

Wade Marks

Robert Ochsner

(Somewhere in the Bowels of Golberg)



## Contributors

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| Jill Dais         | English                                     | Eureka, SD      |
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| Jeff Gleason      | Graduate School—Wildlife                    | Arlington, SD   |
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| Emilie Hagny      | Graphic Design                              | Gettysburg, SD  |
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